

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 125973
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY EA/ROC:DGBROWN:SJP
APPROVED BY EA:RHOLBROOKE
S/S-O - SVALERGA

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P 172353Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PDIP, MILI, SREF, TW

SUBJECT: HOLBROOKE-SHEN DISCUSSION

1. DURING MAY 17 LUNCHEON WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE, ROC AMBASSADOR SHEN INQUIRED SKEPTICALLY ABOUT EXTENT TO WHICH NORMALIZATION WOULD BE DISCUSSED DURING BRZEZINSKI VISIT. HOLBROOKE CHARACTERIZED VISIT IN STANDARD TERMS EMPHASIZING THAT USG DID NOT ANTICIPATE ANY MOVEMENT ON NORMALIZATION TO RESULT FROM VISIT. SHEN REMAINED UNCONVINCED. SHEN REACTED BITTERLY TO COINCIDENCE OF BRZEZINSKI'S ARRIVAL AND CCK INAUGURAL SAYING THAT, WHILE HE BELIEVED TIMING WAS ACCIDENTAL, MANY IN TAIPEI ASSUMED IT WAS INTENTIONAL. HOLBROOKE SAID THAT THE COINCIDENCE WAS IN FACT INADVERTENT AND EXPRESSED HIS REGRET.

2. SHEN ALSO COMPLAINED THAT VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S TRIP HAD BYPASSED TAIPEI, AS WOULD BRZEZINSKI'S, AND
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 125973

THAT NO ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL HIGHER THAN ASSISTANT SECRETARY WOULD VISIT TAIWAN. HOLBROOKE EXPLAINED SOUTHEAST ASIA FOCUS OF VICE PRESIDENT'S TRIP AND SAID THAT HE WAS AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTATIONS HERE OR IN TAIPEI, WHENEVER ROC WISHED. HE SAID US-PRC NORMALIZATION SHOULD

BE ACCEPTED AS BEING ALSO IN TAIWAN'S INTEREST AND THAT

IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE AT SOME POINT TO DISCUSS HOW NORMALIZATION WOULD BE CARRIED OUT VIS-A-VIS TAIWAN. SHEN VIGOROUSLY REBUTTED WISDOM OF NORMALIZATION, IMPLYING THAT TALKS ON HOW TO IMPLEMENT IT WERE NOT POSSIBLE.

3. HOLBROOKE DESCRIBED GROWING CRISIS OF BOAT REFUGEES FROM VIETNAM AND THE INCREASING PERCENTAGE OF ETHNIC CHINESE AMONGST REFUGEES. HE SAID THAT HE EXPECTED REFUGEE SITUATION TO GET WOESE BEFORE IT GETS BETTER AND URGED ROC TO RECONSIDER WHAT ADDITIONAL STEPS IT COULD TAKE, SAYING THAT USG WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH ROC AGAIN ON THIS ISSUE.

4. SHEN ASKED ABOUT USG'S DECISIONS ON ROC'S REQUEST TO BUY AIRCRAFT, I-HAWK AND HARPOON. HE SAID THAT USG'S FAILURE TO RESPOND TO ROC'S REQUESTS EVEN NOW PRIOR TO NORMALIZATION RAISED SERIOUS QUESTIONS IN ROC MINDS AS TO USG'S WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO CONTINUE SUPPLYING ARMS AFTER NORMALIZATION. HOLBROOKE RESPONDED THAT ROC'S REQUESTS WERE NOW UNDER SERIOUS AND ACTIVE CONSIDERATION AT VERY HIGHEST LEVELS WITHIN US GOVERNMENT.

5. SEPTTEL RESPONDS TO TAIPEI 3046.

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PAGE 03 STATE 125973

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE125973
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DGBROWN:SJP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780208-0948
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780547/aaaabodx.tel
Line Count: 94
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 83ddb39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2659006
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HOLBROOKE-SHEN DISCUSSION
TAGS: PDIP, MILI, SREF, TW, US, (HOLBROOKE, RICHARD), (SHEN, JAMES C H)
To: TAIPEI
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/83ddb39b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014